

DOD Signs Corporate Contract With NAPA Auto Parts

The Department of Defense is partnering with NAPA, the National Automotive Parts Association, in a new strategy focused on improving the procurement process for government credit card users. The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) corporate contract with NAPA will give local purchasers access to over 230,000 automotive parts from the nation's largest automotive supplier, along with discounts of 20 to 50 percent.

Through its 9,200 dealers, supported by 71 distribution centers located throughout the country, NAPA also offers free delivery and an online ordering system. NAPA sales to DLA have increased 300 percent since the contract went into affect in 1997.

Combining the convenience and efficiency of the credit card with the "buying power" of DLA gives the military customer better prices and better service. Purchasers buy, (by either government credit card or MILSTRIP/FEDSTRIP requisition) from the manufacturer's inventory when possible and utilize the manufacturer's distribution system when feasible.

NAPA also will assist DLA's maintenance locations by developing a stocking inventory assortment based on the vehicles in the fleet and previous usage. An example is the Ohio National Guard Combined Support Maintenance Shop's agreement with KPS NAPA Auto Parts in Newark, Ohio. Local dealership manager Randy Swihart has agreed to keep 10 HMMWV steering gear rebuild kits on his shelf at all times to support the unit that maintains all of the state's National Guard vehicles.

"They deliver within an hour or less," added Sergeant Crane. "That allows me to stay here in the shop to do the things I need to be doing instead of running down to the store. They're very responsive to our needs, and we pay as we go (using the IMPAC card)."

The NAPA partnership adds one more important advantage. When parts become obsolete, the government won't be stuck with them since it will be NAPA's responsibility to eliminate the items from its inventory.

Another program for the future is the Distribution Center Stocking Program for customers with regular large purchases. Customers will be able to send their orders directly to the nearest NAPA distribution center by fax or e-mail and their orders will be pulled, packed, and shipped to the local NAPA dealer, who then delivers them to the military customer.

Partnerships such as the ones with NAPA move DoD from the old inventory-base supply system to an economically efficient distribution-based supply system. The military services can no longer afford to purchase and manage large numbers of spare parts in the field, but they still need the right parts at the right place at the right time.

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